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AUTHOR Dollarhide, Colette T.
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ABSTRACT

This paper proposes a model of mentoring that is merged with identity development theory, that provides suggestions for ways in which college faculty coming from any cultural perspective can provide a meaningful mentoring in an effort to retain students of diversity. After discussing the role of mentoring in attracting and retaining students of diversity and the mentoring process, the paper introduces a new approach to mentoring. This model involves the building of a relationship, both inside and outside the classroom, in which faculty are sensitized to the stages of identity development that affect the mentoring relationship for students of color. It examines six stages of development (naivete, internalized negative messages and conformity, confusion, naming, reflection, and multiperspective internalization) and suggests mentoring strategies that focus on personal as well as academic development. The paper argues that developing sensitivity to issues of identity development, empowering students to find their own answers within the discipline, and advocating for students are the ultimate goals of the model. (Contains 31 references.) (MDM)

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Running Head: Mentoring Using Identity Development Theory

MENTORING USING IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT THEORY: RETAINING STUDENTS OF DIVERSITY

A Paper Presented at the Michael Tilford Conference on

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Wichita State University

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Colette T. Dollarhide, Ed.D.

Emporia State University

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Colette T. Dollarhide

There is a lack of diversity in the faculty of many academic disciplines, yet research suggests that students of diversity look for mentors to feel connected to the campus at which they study. This paper proposes a model of mentoring that is merged with identity development theory, providing suggestions for ways that faculty from any cultural perspective can provide meaningful mentoring in an effort to retain students.

Mentoring Using Identity Development Theory:
Retaining Students of Diversity

According to Alderfer (1994), communication across borders of any kind -- across difference in values, culture, language, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or ability -- involves "embedded intergroup relations and unconscious parallel processes" (p. 221), which govern the quality of the interaction. Every transaction between people depends on the unique personalities of those involved, messages individuals received and internalized from their own group, and the present and historical relations between the groups that the individuals represent. The only way to get beyond these borders is to acknowledge the intergroup relations, make conscious the parallel processes of internalized messages, and to use these dynamics to forge new understanding. Without this acknowledgment, diversity is ignored, undervalued, or worse yet, subverted into stereotypes. This paper represents one effort to cross those borders and increase the understanding of the dynamics of diversity as applied to college campuses.

Five out of every six labor market entrants between 1986 and 2000 are women, persons of diversity, and immigrants (Hoyt, 1989), yet college enrollment of diverse persons lag woefully behind (Hurtado, 1997). In the blurring of cause and effect, one reason often cited for the low college enrollment of diverse persons is the lack of diverse persons in places of leadership in many fields and in academia, resulting in a lack of role models and mentors. Yet mentoring can be a way for a student to connect with a campus, an academic discipline, and a profession (Smith & Davidson, 1992). According to Rodriguez (1994), "Providing role models from backgrounds similar to the ethnic minority students, and informing students of recent development in the world

of work, is the key to motivating them to expand the range of careers they choose to investigate and enter" (pg 179).

How can institutions of higher education increase enrollment and retention of diverse students? One suggestion would be to increase mentors for diverse students, both by hiring more faculty of diversity (Bernal, 1994), and by training interested faculty in ways to become mentors for diverse students.

Neither of these solutions will be accomplished overnight. But if there were a model to assist interested faculty in mentoring students of diversity, it might be possible to increase enrollment and retention of diverse students, leading to the potential for more terminal degrees among diverse populations, in turn leading to the potential for more of those with terminal degrees entering academia, increasing diversity among the nation's faculty. For example, Smith and Davidson (1992) found that mentoring for Black graduate students was a statistically significant predictor of teaching, research, and grant activities, regardless of the race of the mentor.

A model of mentoring diverse students must be predicated on an understanding of mentoring and an understanding of developmental issues for diverse persons. According to Berry (1994), one of the most salient developmental issues for diverse persons is the development of a diverse identity: one predicated on the subjective sense of "identity with or attachment to the group[, where] people feel they belong and work to maintain the ethnocultural group and their membership in it" (p. 123). Austin, Carter, and Vaux (1990) found that racial identity was indeed correlated with help-seeking behaviors, and those authors suggested that professions wishing to attract diverse students should develop strategies that target activities based on the varying stages

of racial identity.

An Overview of Mentoring

An overview of mentoring suggests that mentoring provides immense advantages to all participants. "Adults who work with mentors grow in their own sense of intellectual competence, as well in their sense of purpose, their feelings of autonomy, and their personal integrity" (Bova & Phillips, 1984, p. 16), as well as learning risk-taking behaviors of dealing with failure, communication skills, political skills and socialization (such as how/where to get jobs, politically appropriate behaviors, inside information about people in power, and learning about the organization's values). In addition, they learn specific professional skills (such as putting theory into practice, getting the big picture, and learning how to put problems into context) (Bova & Phillips, 1984). Tangible advantages have been documented when persons of diversity find a mentor; one study cites increased annual earnings for African American MBAs of over $16,000 for mentored graduates (Dreher & Cox, 1996). Furthermore, mentoring provides a connection between learner/protégé and teacher/mentor in which communication centers around the teaching of meaning in context; the learner becomes self-authorizing in a transforming relationship, where learning takes place contingent upon the interdependence of support and challenge (Daloz, 1988; Parks, 1990).

The dynamics of support and challenge evolve from the roles the mentor fills in the learning process. Tentoni (1995) summarizes the five roles of a mentor as sponsoring (defined as protecting protégé from environment and from self, supporting, and promoting), encouraging (defined as affirming and inspiring), counseling (defined as problem solving, listening, clarifying,

and advising), befriending (defined as accepting and relating), and teaching (defined as modeling, informing, and defining).

Models of mentoring have evolved in business, nursing, teaching, and other professions (see Bennetts, 1995; Blunt, 1995; Burgess, 1994; Gehrke & Kay, 1984; and Routh, 1995). One discussion of effective mentoring from a traditional perspective is from Borman and Colson (1984), who provide the following suggestions. (However, these suggestions were developed without specific consideration of diversity; when evaluating these guidelines in terms of diversity [Ivey, Ivey, & Simek-Morgan, 1997] certain cautions emerge. These cautions are highlighted in italics.)

1. Encourage a positive attitude.
2. Encourage the protégé to establish personal values and goals.
3. Encourage the protégé to maintain an open mind to new ideas.
4. Interactions should be that of sharing, caring, and empathizing.
5. Encourage the protégé to use creative problem-solving processes.
6. Encourage the protégé to be an attentive listener and an **assertive** questioner.

   Appropriate assertive behavior is culturally defined. Protégés should determine what is appropriate within their culture.
7. Encourage the protégé to be an **independent** thinker.

   Structure leading to independence might be more comfortable for many diverse persons.
8. Encourage the protégé to recognize **individual** strengths and uniquenesses and build upon them.

Independent thinking and focus on individual strengths presumes an individualistic worldview vs. a collectivistic (diverse) worldview.

9. Assist the protégé in developing confidence.

Confidence is built from collective success for many persons of difference who may be from a more collective worldview.

10. Stress that the protégé should be aware of the environment, and:

more **intuitive; *Intuition could be culturally or gender-influenced**

more problem-sensitive and ready to make the **most of opportunities;*

There are many implications here in terms of competitive vs. cooperative cultural norms

and to be an **active** participant, not a spectator; be a **risk-taker**.

This may depend on the action orientation of the protégé's culture (the degree to which culturally appropriate behavior is defined as moving in and taking action as opposed to studying the environment carefully first), and on tolerance for risk in a new setting.

11. Encourage the protégé to be flexible and adaptable in attitudes and actions, looking for alternatives, and seeing situations/persons from different perspectives.

A New Approach to Mentoring

Incorporating theories of identity development and making mentoring more culturally sensitive takes the best of traditional perspectives of mentoring and weaves them with increased sensitivity to diversity issues. This new model involves the building of a relationship, both inside and outside of the classroom, in which faculty are sensitized to the stages of identity development

that affect the mentoring relationship for students of color, and in which that increased sensitivity is used to establish meaningful dialogue with the student about his/her learning and his/her professional goals. Faculty, students, institutions, and professions all benefit from this model. But rather than address faculty in terms of "sensitivity training", the purpose here is to assist faculty in creating specific social contexts, i.e., mentoring relationships, which can facilitate mutual understanding and appreciation, consistent with ecological pragmatism (Kelly, Azelton, Burzette & Mock, 1994). In these social contexts (mentoring relationships), the four conditions of meaningful, transformative learning about diversity are met--awareness of *interdependence* between faculty and student, *informal contact* between mentor and protégé, *expanded resource bases* for both faculty mentor and student protégé, and time and space for *reflection and integration* of learning (Kelly et al, 1994).

The goal of any effective mentoring relationship is the eventual empowerment of the protégé. Hawks and Muha (1991) recommend that faculty assist with career empowerment, and by extension, provide mentoring, for diverse persons by "foster[ing] intrinsic motivation in students by emphasizing student-generated vs. ... teacher-transmitted knowledge" (p. 255), and that faculty advocate for students "by viewing problems primarily as a result of the system versus a flaw within the student" (p. 258). Mentors need to challenge rather than reflect the values of the society, and view educational and occupational underachievement in terms of the diverse students' relationships with educators and institutions rather than lack of ability or aspiration. Developing sensitivity to issues of identity development, empowering students to find their own answers within the discipline, and advocating for students are the ultimate goals of the proposed model.

There are many models of identity development: of African Americans (Jackson, 1975), of Asian Americans (Sue & Sue, 1990), of Latinas/os (Casas & Pytluk, 1995), of biracial persons (Kerwin & Ponterotta, 1995), of Whites (Helms, 1995), of women (Carter & Parks, 1996) and of alternative sexual orientation (D'Augelli, 1994). The following model is based on all of these (including Atkinson, Morten, and Sue, 1979, and Ivey, Ivey, & Simek-Morgan, 1997); the stage of identity development is described on the left side of each box, and the strategy for academic and personal development is on the right. The term "Difference" is used synonymously with "diversity" to describe any diversity marker: gender, culture, race, religion, sexual orientation, differently abled, etc.

IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT:	MENTORING STRATEGY:
Non-dominant values programming	P = personal focus of stage A = academic focus of stage
STAGE 1: NAIVETE •No awareness of self as different.	P: Encourage awareness of cultural uniqueness; communicate the positive value of Difference. A: Encourage awareness of learning needs. A: Focus on career issues to connect learning with possible professional development.

STAGE 2: INTERNALIZED NEGATIVE MESSAGES AND CONFORMITY *Difference is equated with being "less than". *Protégé values dominant cultural norms over all others.	P: Encourage protégé to confront internalized negative messages of own culture or values. P & A: Confront any destructive self-labeling in terms of culture or in terms of learning abilities. A: Focus on and encourage learning strengths. A: Encourage development of view self as potential professional within the discipline.
STAGE 3: CONFUSION *Protégé experiences conflict between dominant values and values of own group. *Protégé experiences conflict between view of Difference hierarchy and feelings of shared diverse experience.	P: Remain patient with values confusion. P: Allow time for discussion of confusion. A: Know diverse role models in your discipline for student to contact to discuss diversity in the profession. A: Devote more time for student-generated reactions and process.

STAGE 4: NAMING •Protégé recognizes that own diversity is an identity unto itself. •Encounters full meaning of own culture and the meaning of diversity in a biased society. •May experience conflict over feelings of empathy for other cultural groups and feelings of culturocentrism. •May experience great anger; may have trouble working with dominant-group members. •Protégé is immersed in valuing own culture.	P: Facilitate contact with professionals of diversity in your discipline. P: Acknowledge that you cannot know what it is like to be Different in this culture or profession. P: Expect rejection/questioning of relationship if you are not of Difference. P & A: Focus on learning and the discipline; this is the strongest point of contact between you and the protégé at this stage. A: Focus on student-generated reactions to the discipline. Encourage independent thinking and creative answers to academic issues.
STAGE 5: REFLECTION •Protégé explores full ramifications of his/her Difference. •Protégé is concerned with the basis of self-appreciation; seeking balance between own culturocentrism and justice. •S/He is striving to find own appreciation of Difference of others.	P: Continue to encourage cultural valuing, exploration, and expression. A: Show student how the ambiguity of the discipline is a parallel process to learning about self, values, and Voice (Reinharz, 1994): "We all struggle to find who we are."

STAGE 6: MULTIPERSPECTIVE INTERNALIZATION •Protégé is able to value own culture; s/he experiences pride in self and awareness of Different Others. •Able to recognize and appreciate select members of own culture. •Protégé is able to recognize what is of value in dominant culture and identify select members of that culture who value Difference (S/He lets go of depreciation of all members of dominant culture). •Protégé may choose to fight racism and oppression. •Integrates all into balanced view of self and others; sees multiple frames of reference.	P: Facilitate self-empowerment to work toward systemic change in profession and in social context. P: Support student's struggle to find balance in self-view and in worldview. P & A: Teach protégé how to trust inner voice and give that Voice expression in personal and professional life. P & A: Teach protégé how to mentor others to keep the momentum of understanding going. A: Facilitate self-empowerment to continue lifelong learning and personal/professional development. A: Facilitate exploration of student's progress in the discipline. A: Show the benefits of dealing with ambiguity in discipline and in life; support creativity and ways that Difference and Different perspectives can bring richness to profession.

Conclusion

Students need a compelling reason to enroll at any given institution of higher education, and they need equally compelling reasons to continue to re-enroll. It is a given that students will

not enroll where they do not feel valued, and students of diversity often encounter additional challenges when they access higher education. It behooves faculty of all disciplines to learn of ways they can contribute to the success of their students--and it benefits society as a whole to increase the diversity of all professions. Since the door to many professions is often higher education, and the door to higher education is often the faculty, mentoring diversity can be one of the most pleasant ways imaginable to open that door and unlock the potential of all our students.

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